

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A business method for trading information, comprising the steps of:  
collecting information from a user at a first location, having a  
5 confidential data portion and an exchange data portion;  
transmitting only the exchange data portion to a central location;  
defining an exchange data set at the central location;  
updating the exchange data set using the exchange data portion; and  
determining an output data set from the exchange data set, wherein the  
10 output data set is accessible by one or more users.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of transmitting only the  
exchange data portion to a central location includes the step of transmitting only  
the exchange data portion to a central location via a network.  
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3. The method of claim 2, wherein the network includes an Internet  
communication link.
4. The method of claim 1, further comprising the steps of:  
20 defining one or more groups; and  
determining one or more groups associated with the collected  
information.
5. The method of claim 4, further comprising the step of attaching the  
25 determined groups to the exchange data portion.
6. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of defining the user  
as a qualified user.
- 30 7. The method of claim 6, further comprising the step of defining the  
exchange data set as a qualified user exchange data set.

8. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of transmitting the output data set from the central location to the first location via an Internet communication link.

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9. The method of claim 8, further comprising storing the output data set at the first location.

10. The method of claim 1, further comprising storing the output data set at the central location.

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11. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of storing the collected information at the first location.

12. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of storing the confidential data portion at the first location.

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13. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of determining the output data set further comprises the steps of:

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defining a statistical model;  
generating a statistical data set using the exchange data set and the statistical model; and  
storing the statistical data set as the output data set.

14. The method of claim 13, further comprising the step of receiving a second exchange data portion from a second user; and updating the exchange data set using the second exchange data portion.

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15. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of collecting information from a user further includes the steps of:

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defining a graphical user interface including a webpage; and

collecting information from the user via the webpage.

16. The method of claim 15, further comprising the steps of:  
accessing the central controller via the webpage using a login routine,  
5 wherein the login routine determines whether a user is allowed to  
access the central controller.
17. The method of claim 14, further comprising the step of transmitting the  
output data set to the user at the completion of the login routine.  
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18. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of generating a graph  
from the output data set.
19. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of collecting information from a  
15 user includes the step of collecting benchmark information.
20. The method of claim 19, wherein the benchmarking information is asset  
information.
- 20 21. The method of claim 20, wherein the asset information includes public  
business valuation information.
22. The method of claim 20, wherein the asset information includes private  
business valuation information.  
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23. The method of claim 20, wherein the asset data information includes  
portfolio information.
24. The method of claim 20, wherein the asset information includes capital  
30 structure information.

25. The method of claim 20, wherein the benchmarking information is performance information.
26. A network business method for providing commercial statistical data via  
5 a network, comprising the steps of:  
collecting commercial data information via a webpage from a user;  
generating a commercial data record from the commercial data  
information, including a confidential subrecord and an exchange  
subrecord;  
10 defining a commercial statistical analysis system having an exchange  
data set;  
transmitting only the exchange subrecord via a network communication  
link to the commercial statistical analysis system;  
updating the exchange data set using the exchange subrecord; and  
15 generating a commercial statistical data set using the commercial  
statistical analysis system, wherein the commercial statistical data  
set is accessible by the user.
27. The method of claim 26, further comprising the step of transmitting the  
20 commercial statistical data set from the commercial statistical analysis system to  
the user via the network communication link.
28. The method of claim 27, further comprising storing the commercial  
statistical data set.
- 25 29. The method of claim 28, further comprising storing the commercial  
statistical data set at the commercial statistical analysis system.
30. The method of claim 26, further comprising the step of storing the  
30 collected information at the location of the user.

31. The method of claim 26, further comprising the step of storing the confidential subrecord at the location of the user.
32. The method of claim 26, wherein the step of generating the commercial statistical data set further comprises the steps of:
- 5 defining a statistical model; and  
generating a commercial statistical data set using the exchange data set and the statistical model.
- 10 33. The method of claim 32, further comprising the step of receiving a second exchange subrecord from a second user; and updating the exchange data set using the second exchange subrecord.
34. The method of claim 26, further comprising the steps of:
- 15 accessing the commercial statistical analysis system via the web page using a login routine, wherein the login routine determines whether a user is allowed to access the commercial statistical analysis system.
- 20 35. The method of claim 34, further comprising the step of transmitting the commercial statistical data set to the user at the completion of the login routine.
36. The method of claim 26, further comprising the step of generating a graph from the commercial statistical data set.
- 25 37. The method of claim 26, wherein the step of collecting information from a user includes the step of collecting asset information.
38. The method of claim 37, wherein the asset information includes public business valuation and other statistical information.
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39. The method of claim 37, wherein the asset information includes private business valuation and other statistical information.

40. The method of claim 26, further comprising the step of determining  
5 whether the user is a qualified user.

41. The method of claim 40, further comprising the step of defining a qualified user exchange data set, wherein the qualified user exchange data set is allowed to be accessed only by the qualified user.  
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42. The method of claim 41, further comprising the step of defining the exchange data set to include the qualified user exchange data set as a subset of the exchange data set.

43. The method of claim 26, comprising the step of defining the network communication link to include an internet communication link.  
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44. A system for trading commercial information via a network, the system comprising:  
20 a commercial information exchange system including an exchange system controller and an exchange data storage system;  
wherein the commercial information exchange system is configured to receive an exchange subrecord from a user via the network,  
updates the exchange data set using the exchange subrecord, and  
25 generates a commercial statistical data set, wherein the commercial statistical data set is accessible by one or more users who provide exchange subrecords to the commercial information exchange system.

45. The system of claim 44, wherein the user is a qualified user, and the commercial statistical data set is accessible only by one or more qualified users.  
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46. The system of claim 44, further comprising:  
a first user interface located at the user;  
wherein the first user interface is in communication with the commercial  
5 information exchange system via the network, for transmitting the  
exchange record from the first user interface to the commercial  
information exchange system.
47. The system of claim 44, wherein the network includes the Internet.  
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48. The system of claim 44, wherein the exchange system controller further  
includes a web server.
49. The system of claim 44, wherein the exchange system controller further  
15 includes a query manager for managing queries between the user and the  
commercial information exchange system.
50. The system of claim 44, wherein the exchange system controller includes  
a statistical model, wherein the commercial statistical data set is generated using  
20 the exchange data set and the statistical model.
51. A computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions  
for performing a method for providing commercial statistical data via a network  
comprising:  
25 collecting commercial data information via a webpage from a user;  
generating a commercial data record from the commercial data  
information, including a confidential subrecord and an exchange  
subrecord;  
defining a commercial statistical analysis system having an exchange  
30 data set;

transmitting only the exchange subrecord via a network communication  
link to the commercial statistical analysis system;  
updating the exchange data set using the exchange subrecord; and  
generating a commercial statistical data set using the commercial

5                    statistical analysis system, wherein the commercial statistical data  
set is accessible by the user.

52.     The method of claim 51, further comprising transmitting the commercial  
statistical data set from the commercial statistical analysis system to the user via  
10    the network communication link.

53.     The method of claim 51, wherein the step of generating the commercial  
statistical data set further comprises:  
          defining a statistical model; and  
15        generating a commercial statistical data set using the exchange data set  
          and a statistical model.

54.     The method of claim 51, further comprising the step of receiving a  
second exchange subrecord from a second user; and updating the exchange data  
20    set using the second exchange subrecord.

55.     The method of claim 51, further comprising the step of:  
          accessing the commercial statistical analysis system via the webpage  
          using a login routine, wherein the login routine determines  
25        whether a user is allowed to access the commercial statistical  
          analysis system.

56.     The method of claim 55, further comprising the step of transmitting the  
commercial statistical data set to the user at the completion of the login routine.

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57. The method of claim 51, wherein the step of collecting information from a user includes the step of collecting private business valuation information.

58. A method for trading private company statistical data comprising:  
5 collecting private company data information via a webpage from a user;  
generating a private company data record from the private company data  
information, including a confidential subrecord and an exchange  
subrecord;  
defining a statistical analysis system having an exchange data set;  
10 transmitng only the exchange subrecord to the statistical analysis  
system;  
updating the exchange data set using the exchange subrecord; and  
generating a private company statistical data set using the statistical  
analysis system, wherein the private company statistical data set  
15 is accessible by one or more qualified users, wherein a qualified  
user is defined as a user who provides exchange subrecords to the  
statistical analysis system.